

THE BETTER WAY

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THE BETTER WAY.

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PUBLIC SEANCE

By the Independent Club, Berkeley Hall, Boston.
Friday, February 22, 1889.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Through the Mediumship of J. Wm. Fletcher,
Assisted by Miss Emma J. Nickerson.

Reported for The Better Way by J. W. Powell.

"Why do we so seldom hear from Professor William Denton and others who gave so much of their lives to our truth?"

You must remember that all spirits, whether embodied or disembodied, have a sphere of their own and that out of that sphere they have little power and can exert but a small amount of influence. Scientific minds like Professor Denton were minds that were trained into a sort of rut. They had a certain line of thought which they followed out, but were not responsive to other lines of thought. In passing to the spiritual world the only means that they would have of communicating would be through directing that power which was theirs while they were here on earth.

Prof. Denton, who was deeply interested in geology and the natural sciences, applied them and their law to everything that presented itself. On entering the spiritual world he would still have great pleasure in verifying the opinions, the ideas and the lessons that he had taught and learned while here upon the earth. He would find it, however, difficult to manifest his thought or to repeat what he knew here, or again, to carry out *in extenso*, what he had learned in the spiritual world, since there are so few brains that are organized or developed up to that point where they would be capable of receiving either his impression or influence.

You are probably aware, many of you who have been accustomed to our line of teaching, that we have long since insisted that of all class of persons that should be educated, your mediums require it most. An uneducated medium is exactly like an instrument that is out of tune. There may be two or three notes in tune, but the majority of them are not, and consequently when the hand of a master runs up and down the ivory keys, he cannot to any degree recreate or reflect the melody or harmony that was surging through his soul. Exactly so with a developed spirit, who returning to the earth with great truths to teach and knowledge to impart, finds himself in connection with those who are not susceptible to his control and who do not present a capacity for receiving it. But if on the other hand, you find a person who is thoroughly unfolded mentally, you will find in them an instrument which can be used by the more advanced spirits.

Why you so seldom hear from Theodore Parker, and Professor William Denton, and Zoellner, and many of those scientific men of the past, is because you have so few in the present time, who are mediumistic, who are possessed of scientific development. Educate thoroughly your mediums as you do your physicians or anybody else, and develop the powers of mind with which they are possessed, and then you will furnish an open avenue through which these who were wise on

earth are able to come, and the added wisdom of the spiritual world.

"Why do not all spirits agree in what they say?"

There are thousands of people in this world who see the same thing, and yet there are not any two out of a thousand that tell the same story. Whenever we hear different accounts by different spirits we are often prone to say, or rather to quote the story we once heard, of the four blind men who saw the elephant. It seems strange that a blind man could see, but they have some times, or think they have the power to perceive. When these four men stood up beside the elephant, one reached his hand up and felt something moving about. Why, he says, I know what an elephant is. What is it? Why, it is a thin, flat thing like a wing, and it is moving back and forth all the time. He had hold of the elephant's ear, and he couldn't see anything, so he thought that was the entire elephant. Another man said, "You are quite wrong; the elephant is like a mountain; why I can lean against it." He was leaning up against the side of the animal, but he couldn't see the trunk; he hadn't hold of that, and he thought that all that there was of the elephant was just a great mass of flesh.

The third one had hold of the elephant's foot, and he said, "I think it must be something like a tree with outstretched branches." The fourth one had hold of the elephant's tail, and he thought it was nothing more nor less than a snake, or some little thing like the limb of a tree; he couldn't imagine that it was the mass of flesh that the second one had said.

Now all these were right; the only trouble was, with them, that they only expressed a part of truth; they did not comprehend the whole of it. That is exactly the way with many spirits, who each vary in their degree of comprehension, and in telling a part of the truth imagine that they have told the whole of it.

We often hear objections made to the theory of reincarnation, and a spirit will come back and say, "I don't know anything about it." Why, that is no argument against the subject. There are thousands of truths and facts in the world that the ignorant don't know anything about, but that does not disprove them; it only announces how much some people have to learn before they are able to grasp and comprehend fundamental laws of life.

You must remember that the spiritual world is just like this world. A man with strong prejudices goes out, and he finds the time being tries to fit all he says own to his peculiar ideas and thoughts as he develops he sees more. A man bound to any church would look out that theological realization; a man who is entirely independent of everything of that kind would not find anything that sort to satisfy his craving. A scientific mind finds a larger opportunity of learning more; and so on. So as the spiritual world is concerned you find all these grades of opinion.

There are higher conditions of thought which I might refer to that are entirely above the spirit world, exactly as the spirit world is above the earthly world. In that higher sphere all spirit work, because there they can see the reality of every subject under discussion but your returning spirits only get a partial view of what they see, and then they tell you they don't know anything about a subject, don't imagine it necessarily follows that it is because there is no subject to understand there the benefit of a doubt, should that while they may not know subject, the fault is perhaps with them; and until thoroughly advanced beyond prejudice, never expect an unaided opinion either from a mortal or spirit.

"What the difference between a spirit and an angel?"
Well, difference is marked. We

have often heard it said, that women are angels, and of course we might have an opinion in regard to that.

Now, so far as spirits are concerned, they are real men and women who have just passed out of this life into what is called the spiritual world; they are no better, no worse, no wiser than they were before. They have taken up the broken chain of life, just as they laid it down here; but after they have passed through many experiences they gradually unfold; they grow wiser in their conclusions, more just in their judgment, more sympathetic, more affectionate, and in every way more rounded out and perfected. When they have reached the point that prejudice, and selfishness and animosity play no part whatever with them, then they have passed through the transition state that leads from a spirit into an angel.

A spirit can be vindictive, a spirit can return to make mischief, a spirit may inspire evil; an angel never can. A spirit has the taint of the earth upon it; the angel is one who has passed through all of that and left it entirely behind.

I would say, then, that one and perhaps the most marked difference between an angel and a spirit is this: a spirit may be inspired by jealousy and selfishness; an angel never can. One may wholly consider his own particular welfare; the other finds its welfare by ministering to those who are not as fortunate as himself.

"Is help gained from a developing medium?"

Surely. If you wish to have your child taught anything, whether it shall be music, or art, or anything else, you would place that child under some wise teacher, and then the child would gain in knowledge from him. The teacher has no power to create knowledge whatever; no amount of instruction could ever do that. All that the teacher can do is to call out into external expression that which already exists in the mind of the child.

When you go to a developing medium you bring yourself into close relationship with a strong band of spirits who would have the power of imparting their influence to other persons, which would act exactly upon the mediumistic possibilities as the sun acts upon a seed placed in the soil. It seeks to unfold, to develop and to strengthen. You have here to day several persons who are possessed of strong magnetic power. We can see those who are present who would have great power so far as ministering to the sick is concerned. Wherever you find a magnetism that will assist the sick, there also you will find a power that can also be utilized in forms of development as well; for human magnetism is only a strong power that when it is extended will serve to strengthen and to help those who are seeking spiritual aid and spiritual unfoldment.

"Do children (babes) see or sense forms when it is said, 'Baby is smiling at the angels?'"

Surely; very young children are possessed of perceptive powers stronger oftentimes than those that are about you. You know the Scotch have a theory that whenever a child smiles in his sleep an angel is whispering to him; and surely it were impossible to conceive of a more beautiful thought than the smile of a child in slumber is caused by the close proximity of a beautiful unfolded spirit.

We are told, aye, we know, that very young children are cognizant of the presence of spirits, and that they see far more than you think they do. We have seen, in our experience, a number of young children who were able to sit on the floor and play for hours, insisting that they were playing with some other child, and talk away as if they were talking to another child, which to them is a reality, and we have no doubt but what they do perceive a spiritual presence.

"Do you think unpleasant people would prevent spirits from coming to those that love them?"

Assuredly; unpleasant people can do almost anything; that is why there is so much devilry in the world at the present time. I assure you that you put one evil-minded person in a neighborhood and he will do more harm in one month to the welfare of that neighborhood than the most contagious disease could possibly do. If you don't believe it, try it for a short time and you will be able to prove it for yourself.

You take a society and put one or two evil-minded persons in the midst of it, and you will find dissension and trouble and annoyance on all sides. It is because those persons who are unpleasant, which means to be evil-minded, are so undeveloped that their magnetism is far more disagreeable and extensive than those who are more unfolded. The lower the person is, the coarser and the stronger their magnetism is, and consequently the more power of doing harm. The more developed the person is, the finer, the more spiritual is the condition or influence that surrounds them.

Now then, a person with an evil power may be able to build up a wall around you that for the time being will prevent the presence of your spirit friends. You will remember that again the Scotch have a theory of "the evil eye;" and they insist that there are some persons who are marked with this power of evil.

I am quite willing to accept that theory, for, after an experience of many years in controlling this and other mediums I have begun to think that there are some persons who for the time take more pleasure in causing others unhappiness, than you and I can possibly understand. I know people will sometimes come to me and say, "How is it possible to bring all kinds of mischief to that person; I shouldn't like anything so well as to take their pride down and to humble them in the dust." That is a beautiful spirit indeed, to find those who are all the time planning things of that kind.

Wherever you find animosity of any kind, there you find an undeveloped spirit whose magnetic conditions are black and wicked and horrible. Now, then, that person can, if he will, build a barrier between you and every good thought, or spoil a pleasant afternoon wherever you may be by things that he may do and say, ruin your family, if you are so unfortunate as to take him or her into it, and destroy your entire peace of mind. How many of you will say, Oh, I should have had a delightful time, but so and so were sitting only three seats ahead of me, and they spoiled the entire pleasure of the afternoon, not by what they said, but by the villainess that they emitted from them. And I state this strongly, because it is a very necessary thing for you to understand.

They have a saying on the earth that "Birds of a feather flock together," with which I agree, but I object to birds of one feather intermingling with birds of another feather; that is where the trouble comes in. Let those who are on the bottom stair stay there until they desire to rise above it, and not have them, in failing to take the step above, try and drag all of those who are on that step down to theirs. That is where the mischief is. We believe in helping all those who aspire, step by step, up the path of progress; but we do not believe in allowing those on the lower step to exert an influence of evil upon others. Therefore we insist that the law of selection is the law that should govern all harmonious relationships on the earth, and unless that be in operation, no peace and no satisfaction can possibly result.

"Why does Ed. Wheeler insist that reincarnation is a myth, particularly if the reincarnations of undeveloped men are frequent from the lower spheres, and not from soul world? It would seem as if this subject was open for observation and study by intelligent spirits."

Well, my dear friends, Mr. Ed. Wheeler was a man who was decidedly

set in his opinions and with all due respect to him, because he is here by my side now, was a man who was determined that reincarnation should not be true, when he was here. It didn't fit into his system of philosophy; and he has shut his eyes to everything except the other side of the argument, just the same as many of our good friends have done here, over and over again. Bye-and-bye he will learn the lesson, for he has not conquered it yet, and doesn't take to it kindly, and is bound he won't learn it; that is all. You think this extraordinary? Oh, no. If you knew our good friend, Mr. Wheeler, you knew a man in whom the heights and the depths were more strongly marked than any other person that we have seen. His prejudices, like the goodness of his heart, were most pronounced; you couldn't influence him a particle. I might talk to him forever; it wouldn't make any difference. He might go where the operation was being done; he would not believe it. So he will have to wait awhile, and after a short time, (about ten thousand years,) he will be able to understand this thing; but not until then; and if you are here, my friends, he will probably come back to tell you, but perhaps you may have solved that question before that time comes for yourself.

"If two persons are at work in the same room at the same time, can one draw strength from the other?"

"If two persons are at work in the same room, can one unconsciously affect the other so that one gains by association, and the other loses?"

Yes; that question is easily answered. I would say that where two persons are in the same room together, first that the one can consciously help the other and the other can consciously be helped, by the law of transmission. You transmit magnetism from one to the other in this instance through your desire to assist the other. There is a strong power that goes from one influence to the other, that is both manifest and realized. On the other hand, it is a strange law, and yet easily understood, that the stronger ever draws from the weaker. The Bible has a queer statement of that kind; it says that to those who have it shall be given, and from those who have not it shall be taken away, although how you are going to take a thing away from a person when they haven't got it, is a mystery which we suppose needs orthodox glasses to see. But the theory herein taught is plain. Those who have, have a magnet to draw to themselves still more, and those who have not much, have not the power of retaining that which they have.

You cannot find this more strongly illustrated than in taking a person who is advanced in life and have them occupy the same bed with a young child; you find that the older person grows strong, while the child soon grows weak, showing that there has been a magnetic loss on the part of the child, and a magnetic gain on the part of the person, all unconsciously it may be, to both. That is why we are prone to say that there is too much association between individuals.

Every person in this world ought to have a place that is distinctively his own. This interblending and associating with people, no matter how friendly you are, is the worst thing for you morally, physically and spiritually that you can possibly devise. You ought to have your own sphere, you ought to have your own time for thought and consideration; there should be your room, there should be your friend's room. There should be a time when you can get away from everybody and sit down to gain a spiritual equilibrium. At the present time people mix together in the most extraordinary way; those who meet each other will, through politeness, throw their arms around each other and say how glad they are to meet, when if they had a dagger in their hands they would rather use it than give the kiss that they have im-

parted so kindly. That is all wrong; you have no business to take the hand of a person or kiss a person that you are not fully in harmony with. We perceive more deception on the part of some people who call themselves polite than any other one branch of life. It is never polite to lie, to use a very plain statement. If you don't care for a person it ought to be as polite for you to say you don't, as it is for you to say you do like the person, when you have equal reason for the one as for the other. If you shake hands with the people that you hate, and kiss them, what more have you to give those you love? Nothing whatever; and you have not as much, for in the shaking of the hand with an enemy you have got something upon you which, when you go to your friend, you leave, and it is not a blessing to your friend by any means. How many times have you gone out, for instance, and met a person that you disliked and become irritated, and gone to see a friend, and the friend would say, "Why, what is the matter with you today; you don't seem like yourself." You have really taken a reflection of your enemy into your friend's presence.

But you say to me, "You would not have me rude." Oh, no; I would not have you rude. "You would not have me impolite." No, I would not have you impolite, but I would have you good; there is quite a difference between the two. If you have a good reason for not wishing to associate with a person, there is no law in heaven or earth that should make you do it. If there is a reason why you should there is no reason that should ever prevent you from saying it, and the privilege of a choice should be the same one way as the other.

What is more disagreeable than to have a person come and say, "How do you do? And how are you feeling? and I am so glad to see you," when you know that every word they speak is false from beginning to end, and that it is love because they may gain something with somebody else they are polite to you? Now, honesty first, and politeness afterwards; these are our words, and we believe then all the influence exerted will be all for good on all sides.

"Between the Gates," Miss Phelps' book, in it she speaks of a spirit, a doctor, who had done a great deal of good in the world, and who meets with a sudden death, and he cannot reach his wife. He is able after a short time to go to the hospital and different patients, but when he gets at a certain distance, he is stopped. Now, can you explain that to me? Is it correct or is it a false idea?

It is a correct one; wherever there is a sudden death, there is an incompleteness in the life of the person, and they will be held for a long time to the physical conditions of their physical life. A physician (the one referred to) might be able to visit the hospital, or to go among his patients, because they made up his earthly interest; and the thread of life being snapped so suddenly, he was not able to develop in that time the spiritual power which is also necessary.

It is a law of the spirit world, that your life on earth must be completed and rounded out before you are able to enter in upon the enjoyment of the pleasures of the spirit; not for punishment, but rather for experience and education. So a man passing suddenly out of this life would for a while be held near the earth, and then after a time would gradually overcome and conquer the influence of earthly conditions and raise into the spiritual life.

We have seen a great many spirits who passed out with strong opinions, who had not advanced in a thousand years a step in the spiritual world. If you could go down to the Park Street, (I do not mean go in, but go around the church, for instance,) you would see thousands of spirits who don't know anything else but Park Street church. When they were on earth they went there; they had an idea that in heaven

(Concluded on Page 8.)

Written for The Better Way.

A Kiss.

BY MAUDE H. DUCKNER.

In a moment of madness,
Half rapture, half sadness,
With a fervor I dare not explain,
Your strong arms went round me—
A new joy had found me—
You kissed me again and again.

Lips—wild, unrelenting,
Forced mine to consenting,
As heart-throb came soul-throb to claim,
Breathless lips, passion-freighted,
Refused to be sated,
As they parted—to meet mine again.

Though my faith to another
Is pledged, Oh my lover,
Since you anchored my soul by that kiss,
Yet, with lips so persistent,
So fiercely insistent,
Still you seek mine like that and—like this.

Covington, Ky., March 11, 1899.

Written for The Better Way.

Is It Possible to Demonstrate the Existence of God?

Belief is not knowledge or evidence. Nor is it known how man, with the limited mental power he possesses, can demonstrate the affirmative of this question to be true by deduction or reason.

It appears to my mind that the best argument to apply in this case would be that the imperfect implies the existence of the perfect. We are imperfect, and yet aspiring, and this seems to be the condition of all things as far as our experience goes, not only respecting man, but all conditions below him in physical nature. There is everywhere discerned an effort at growth and improvement toward a higher condition. Now this would imply a state of perfection somewhere—a state of ripeness or completeness of those qualities and capacities which man possesses in his imperfect and undeveloped condition, and this perfection personified would be what we term God. Therefore, this implication is all that we can furnish with the limited powers with which we are endowed.

This certainly is enough for our belief, and perhaps this is as much as it is best for us to possess, for we know that much mischief has been done by those who claimed to know God, and to act as His viceregents to the injury of their fellow men. Theologians have done this with no warrant for the claim except that they possessed a book which they asserted was written or dictated by the Deity, and was therefore an infallible guide for the conduct of man.

And although the Bible as well as the sacred books of other nations, all afford evidence of the existence of inspiration, and that men were often illumined at times by a light superior to the natural or normal state, at which times they uttered sentiments above the plane of their natural capacity, yet this has many times been done in the past by those who preferred no claim as prophets, and it is often done at this day without the person so doing arrogating to himself any such claim. This then affords no title to the assumption that the Bible is of divine origin. Nor is there anything in its pages to establish the claim that its source is more than human. Nor can I find anywhere the evidence of any direct communication from the Deity to man, unless the workings of our intuition can be called such.

Nor can it be said with truth that man has come to his present state of civilization and refinement through the process of religious growth alone as many would assert, for the generality of mankind in Christian lands who have had all the advantages of culture which that system affords, do not come up to the standard of virtue which was exhibited by many so-called pagans who lived in the best days of ancient Greece.

Though man may feel assured by his intuitions that there is a God and feel the promptings of his inner nature to render homage, yet he cannot say it is a fact of his knowledge. He may naturally think to himself were there not a God I cannot conceive how I could be and the fact that I am here an imperfect being, growing in knowledge and experience, makes me assume that there must be an infinite being or essence, who needs not to improve to plan or to change laws set in operation at the beginning, so to speak, and to whom time, place and change can have no relation as it has to us.

Is not this sufficient for our well-being, so long as it is all which has been given us, for we have had painful proof in history that those who have been foremost in asserting that they knew of God and His plans and intentions for the government and destination of mankind have often been the most cruel of men—the most inveterate persecutors of their fellow men for opinion's sake. And there is one church at least which still cherishes the same spirit but lacks the power to enforce its decrees in the same manner as of old. And how often has the assumption in more modern times of men claiming to know God; will and purposes been made the basis for hating those who differed with them.

I would say in conclusion that while we can all readily believe in (but not know except interiorly and objectively) a divine power, whose ends are beneficent and who has in view the ultimate happiness of our race, I cannot but think that great injury has resulted from the adoption of "Revealed Religions" like the Hebrew, the Mohammedan and the Christian. Each one of these has glutted itself with blood, while professing to do it with the sanction of the Almighty. It shows that the mass of people would not be satisfied with a natural religion, which might come to all through the intuitions, and which would work no ill to the neighbor, for this allows no room for enthusiasm and fanaticism, which, with a certain class of minds, form the usual adjuncts to a religion which is "revealed."

H. L. B.

Written for The Better Way.

My Views.

BY ALLIE LINDSAY LYNCH.

As aids to the spread of truth, Spiritualists should aim to have a place of meeting in each city, town and hamlet where it is known that even two or three earnest workers dwell; where those wishing to learn its teachings, or led by curiosity that through investigation—ripening into knowledge, could have free access. A place held too sacred for nonsense and bickering, but never too sacred for honest questioning. Where Spiritualists meet in good will, and the investigator is made to feel welcome. Where lectures and test mediums believed to be honest persons are secured by the means of the society or good will of the mediums.

A knowledge of psychic laws will tend to help man in the conduct of this life, in all relations to home, society and government, through its teaching of inestimable value and truth—man must be his own redeemer! Each wrong done here must be righted! The pangs conscience must overtake the evil doer! Only efforts and works can ever remove the sting, can start man on a higher path—the path of progression.

One of its truths, that reaches deepest, is the knowledge that the many eyes of spirit friends are upon us, seeing our acts and reading our thoughts. This is a knowledge that is far more effective than the traditional claims of God's eyes and the devil's patch-work.

Few men with knowledge of a mother's loving look bent in pleading above them, could lie in wait for a fellow-man's life or purse; few could cheat and rob a fellow-man, the widow and the orphan with the same apathy of feeling, or drink down the last dime which should buy bread for his crying child.

Few men could tempt, coax and entice their brother man into the whisky den or gambling hole with the intention to drain his blood or purse, if they knew the mother, at whose knees they stood and prattled in innocent childhood, was tenderly touching her sleeve and seeking to lead them away from evil. Few men could plan and carry out the ruin of a woman's good character and drag her feet into the thorny paths of lasciviousness, who knew their mother saw their hellish purpose; few women would hesitate and succumb.

These are some of the reasons why Spiritualism tends to elevate humanity. No such praiseworthy reasons can any but a Spiritualist produce. If Spiritualism has done no other good in the world it has kept hundreds from the evils mentioned above. But these are not all its merits. It purifies the family and social relations. It places love far above revenge by showing that the ruling powers are lovable—not devilish—are just, not vengeful; are universal, not personal; are stupendous, not frivolous; mighty, not pitiable; enduring, not changeable; stable, not vacillating—not turned aside by man's weak clamorings for punishment of his personal enemy or praise of his hypocritical deeds. Justice rules and God is love. Can any religion of pagan or Christian compare in sublimity with these truths? Can any find fault with these teachings?

Man needs but to reason and investigate to see the superiority of Spiritualism over all otherisms or religions. Man needs to think. Thinking man fears not to give ear to truth, but the cowardly shirks and trembles behind the shadow of some superstitious priest-taught superstition.

Curtain the hire of the pompous priest and he will not care who seeks teachings foreign to those he has expounded at so much per discourse. Remove his pastorship and send him adrift to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow and he will be as likely as any infidel to cross the threshold of the seance room in search of light and knowledge.

Man survives by the fitness of his thoughts; thoughts run into channels that the will permits to open. If his purse is the all-absorbing theme he chains his thoughts to that and digs away at that which fills it fullest. If his moral good and his fellow-man's good is uppermost in his thoughts he is more than likely to find his way into deeper reflections regarding the benefits to accrue unto man, both now and hereafter, and he sets to work to seek the best motives from any source of elevating teachings of which he gets an inkling; thus doing so leads him to obtain a knowledge that benefits all who grasp its truths.

Studies in the Outlying Fields of Psychic Science.

The announcement that I would publish the above entitled work, if a sufficient number of subscribers were secured, has been responded to with such promptness that I have been enabled to at once place the manuscript in the hands of the printers, and can assure its publication by the 15th of April next. The publisher's price will exceed that stated by me, but all those sending their names with subscription price (\$1) before April 15th will receive a copy post paid. After that date the book will pass out of my hands into that of the M. L. Holbrook Co., New York.

I assure the friends who have made it possible for me to at once place the work before the public, that they have my heart-felt thanks, and I sincerely hope that it may not disappoint them.

Address HUDSON TUTTLE, Berlin Heights, O.

Spiritualism is the only science that gives tangible proofs of a life hereafter. "Is your mother making ice cream?" inquired the man when Jonnie came four times during the morning for ice. "No," chuckled little Johnny, "the old man was out late last night."—New York Sun.

Written for The Better Way.

Hans van der Hossen's Earthly Trials.

My wife, she sick; my wife she say I wash de dishes, too.

Me home from plishness often stay
And wash de whole day too.

My wife she sick and get no rest
All night schream mit pain;
Mit two schmall childer at de prest—
She drite me moast insane.

My wife she look like kangaroo,
Her nerves so twist mit pain;
Me do look like a debil drue,
And bote too much complain.

I wash de dishes all de day;
I meenda de clothes and churn;
I darna de shoekings when dey fray,
And makes de fires burn.

(The medium here outgazes at the falling snow.)

I likes de snowmout and de rain;
I like de beople well.
I comes dis day yust to eggplain
My soul not left in hell.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

—MARY K. HOOZER.

[This poem was spoken word for word, line for line, impromptu. I expressed a wish to preserve it. At once the influence reproduced it, reversing the order of the verses, beginning at the last and ending with the first. And I took it down as it came, verbatim, followed by his name, from the lips Mrs. B., the medium.—H. W. B.]

Written for The Better Way.

"As a Man Thinketh, So He Is."

We often meet those so hedged in by environments that they can only murmur and complain at this lot, making all about them uncomfortable and wearing a selfish, peevish and irritable look on their countenances at once repulsive, and I was going to say, disgusting. We heard such a one say a few evenings ago "I don't see what I was born for; if God loved us, why did he not make us perfect at once, and not cause us to suffer so much?" If God had need of automations, he could have done so; but does he not manifest himself in action? Is he not continually expressing himself in growth and life all around us? Stagnation means death; and when we cease to work, grow and progress we die. Such complainings make people sick more or less of the time, because they are living in the negative state, or the negation of health, and not being educated to know that they can overcome or rise to a more positive plane of existence, which is the road to perfect health.

Selfishness is one great cause of sickness. Instead of cultivating a feeling of gratitude because of your blessing (for things are never so bad with us but that they might be worse), we in our selfishness complain because someone else seems to enjoy life and have more of its pleasures and advantages than we ourselves possess, and that very feeling of envy is made apparent on our bodies, for we being all mind, must reflect every thought that comes uppermost. Knowing and realizing this, who would care to reflect envy, hate, selfishness, malice and all the deadly attributes, when their opposites—charity, love, generosity and forbearance—might be the result. There is no need of sitting down to foolish complainings; they are a hindrance to growth and true happiness, that condition which we are all seeking, and when we fully understand this, we shall become a different people; we shall have advanced to a more perfect or positive condition; life will seem worth the living; joy, contentment, peace and satisfaction will be plainly written on our countenances, for we being all mind must reflect the emotions within. We must learn to develop the power we have within us, in order to overcome disease. Truth is health and health is with us constantly, only we fail to recognize it. Our beliefs are made apparent on our bodies. As much as we appropriate, just so much we make manifest. As we grow in intelligence and understanding, our environments become less dense; we expand and broaden in our views, and are able to reach out and grasp more and more the truth that is lying dormant within, waiting recognition and appropriation.

Said this person to me, "If you had continually a pain somewhere you would not be so amiable as you are; nothing seems to trouble you, you do not even grow old, while I am old before my time." That, my dear, is the result of the very secret I am trying to impart to you, but you are so wedded to your infirmities that you are alarmed lest I may rob you of them, and you really resent every effort I make toward your relief. Repent, believe and overcome. You are already repenting, your next step is to believe. Believe what? Why, believe that all is good and that there is no evil in the world as a separate and opposing force, for God (or good) is omnipresent; it fills all space, and there can be no room for anything else, hence what the world calls evil, is a negative good, mistakes made in seeking a more positive form of good. Our aspirations are all for the highest good. We differ according to our degree of intelligence. All life is a manifestation of intelligence, the differing is in the degree of development. This harmonious and positive condition is not reached all at once, but by slow and steady growth, by a continual striving and reaching out after the best, the highest good, searching diligently. By resisting daily the negatives and by persevering, you will be surprised at the advancement made in a short time. We have been weak because ignorant of health, both of which have been latent within us all the time waiting recognition and appropriation. By overcoming our conditions, by recognition and appropriation, we are made powerful to master all things. As a man thinketh, so is he. Yours for truth,

GUSTIE F. HOWE.

Onset, Mass., Feb. 25, 1899.

"Do you find it hard to turn your jokes into poetry?" she asked. "Not so very," replied Tabby. "The hardest thing is to turn the poetry into money."—Time.

Written for The Better Way.

Letter from New York.

I must stop long enough from my advocacy of sun-healing, vital magnetic cure and the great natural agencies for human upbuilding, to have a little off-hand talk with my Cincinnati friends.

In the first place, I want to say and to emphasize the matter, sustain your spiritual papers. The secular papers are often ready to trample our glorious truths in the dust, and seem quite willing and often desirous of destroying all proofs of immortality so that we may fairly stand on a par with the beasts that perish. I do not suppose that this is entirely from pure cussedness, but rather from having their souls so saturated with the materialism of the day, that all spiritualistic phenomena seem unnatural and impossible to them. Several things lately have been a God-send to these worldly editors. First there was the Seybert Commission, of Philadelphia, whose perverted and feeble investigations of the merits of Spiritualism led them to pronounce against the whole matter so far as their investigations went. Professor Kiddle and others have shown up the folly and unfitness of their methods, but some people would take it for granted that when such a scientific body of men pronounced the mediums, whom they investigated as being tricksters, all mediumship must be trickery, although our very infants, and wives and children, whom we know to be incapable of trickery, often exhibit the best kind of mediumship.

Then there was the Dis Debar case, over which our New York papers fattened and came out in high glee. They ransacked the whole world in search of facts to show what a corrupt being she is. Spiritualists had long known and regretted her moral perversity, but they saw that she had those material conditions, by means of which spirits could perform some of the greatest marvels ever known, totally different from the tricks that the conceited magician, Herrman, would produce in trying to imitate her. Every scribbling reporter of some of our sensational papers laid himself out to ridicule every Spiritualist, however high and pure. The blackguard lawyer, Abe Hummel, coolly pronounced all people lunatics who believed in Spiritualism, and this in the face of the fact that Victor Hugo, Prof. Zollner, Alfred Russell Wallace and a host of others, the very lachet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose, were Spiritualists and patrons of mediums.

Then these newspaper sensationalists found great comfort in the fact that Maggie Fox had come out and admitted that Spiritualism was a fraud, and that she herself had been practicing fraud all her life. The Herald devoted columns to her, and yet it was the founder of the Herald, Jas. Gordon Bennett, Sen., who used frequently to have her at his house and who is said to have got her into her drinking habits.

The Evening World publishes the following conundrum, which it considers "good."

LONG BUT GOOD.

Why is Spiritualism like 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'?

Spiritualism was originally done by Margaret Fox's toe, and 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was done by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

T. J. CUNNINGHAM.

I sent Mr. Cunningham the following note:

Mr. Cunningham: Why is your conundrum on Spiritualism like soft soap?

For two reasons: First, it is made of lye; second, it is rather a crude affair.

Then I gave Mr. Cunningham a few remarks about her as follows: Margaret Fox has become debauched with drink, and could not withstand the bribe of \$12,000 to make her go and falsify her whole life by pretending before audiences that the raps were made with the toe. But these raps were often made on the ceiling, on chairs, tables and all over the room. Her toe must have been well stretched. When the raps first broke out, too, in the Hydeville cottage, they signified that they were made by a spirit, who in earth life was a pedlar, but who was murdered for his money and his body secreted in their very cellar, which they would find if they would dig there. They dug there and found a human skeleton. That toe must have been a perfect marvel to know so much.

I am pleased to know that THE BETTER WAY is to avoid all blackguardism and all violent criticism of its rival workers in the field. There has been too much of that in our ranks heretofore. The home paper should be sustained, for it seems impossible to get fair treatment from our secular papers. Spiritualism is inaugurating some of the greatest truths and discourses that the world has ever seen, but our ordinary editor is unaware of them, and has not the bravery to speak of the good points of Spiritualists. Several of our New York papers seem to think they have a carte blanche to abuse and ridicule any prominent Spiritualist or medium. The New York World and Sun are among the most unfair in this respect, although these same papers every week will publish "ghost" stories, or clairvoyant dreams or some other manifestations of spiritual marvels. The fact is that the whole people are getting more and more interested in spiritual truths, and the spiritual wave can no more be impeded than can the billows of the ocean.

In a few years the higher world will be ready to encourage the organization of the ranks of Spiritualism, not to develop creeds, but to act as a mass in the emancipation and enlightenment of humanity, and in the building of Spiritual halls and homes as centers of power. Then the press and the public

prostrum will be forced to treat Spiritualists with respect and fairness. The Catholics of New York are compactly organized, and the press of the city fawn over them, and yet Catholicism has beggared or enslaved every nation where it has predominated, while Spiritualism has ever been on the side of the liberty and upbuilding of the whole people.

But let us as people show that we are indeed Spiritualists, not mere spiritists. Let those who have the means be public spirited and push forward every good work. For years I have been proclaiming and formulating into a science the great spiritualizing agencies of sunlight, magnetism and other refined forces, and, after a great struggle, my work and labors are becoming appreciated in many foreign lands as well as our own. Now a noble soul is about to come forward with money and great organizing power, by which we shall be able to reveal to millions these divine laws of life which influence both bodies and souls. The spring term of our New York College of Magnetism does not open this year till the 15th of April.

E. D. RAHBT, M. D.
New York College of Magnetism, 59 Union Square, N. Y.

Written for The Better Way.

Is There a God?

Presented in another form, the question is, what is the Infinite and Absolute; and how do we attain to a knowledge of either?

By the infinite I understand, not a nothing but a real something; something without bounds or limits, something beyond the experience of matter in space. And by the absolute I understand, not a negative but a positive entity, a real something; something unconditioned, self-existent, the ultimate cause of all perceptible phenomena.

Such being our understanding of the terms "Infinite" and "Absolute," we naturally have some difficulty in understanding how they can be occupied as symbols of "two contradictory nothings." Or what is tantamount to the same thing, "two contradictory negatives of the conceivable" or alternate impossibilities of thought.

And yet this is precisely the logical conclusion from the premises laid down by modern metaphysical writers of the "Orthodox" school. "The mind," says Sir W. Hamilton, "can conceive, and consequently can know, only the limited and the conditionally limited. The unconditionally unlimited, or the infinite, the unconditionally limited or the absolute, cannot positively be constructed to the mind." And Mr. Mansel and others show from the same premises that not only is the absolute and infinite of impossible conception, but likewise that it is impossible for one to have a knowledge, amounting to certainty, of his own personal identity.

The salient points in the argument may be stated as follows: All knowledge is relative. Consciousness itself is possible only in the form of a relation. It predicates a perceiving subject and a perceived object. There must be a conscious mind, and a thing of which it is conscious. Therefore to be conscious of the infinite is to distinguish it, as such, from the finite; and this implies comparison. But how can we compare that of which we are conscious with that of which we are not conscious. Comparison itself being an act of consciousness, is possible only through a consciousness of both objects.

And for a like reason, an act of creation, properly so called, is inconceivable. For to conceive of creation is, to represent in thought the first act of the first cause. This implies ability to conceive one's self at the point where temporal succession begins; that is, a station between phenomena in time and out of time at the same moment which is inconceivable. Nor is this all. If we grant the new general accepted "Orthodox" premise that "knowledge is relative," we must accept the logical sequence that an act of consciousness is impossible. For if there must be a perceiving subject and perceived object, the questions naturally arise, What is it that perceives? What is it that is perceived? If there are two egos, personal identity is destroyed. If there be but one, then comparison is impossible. Hence in either case we cannot be quite sure of our individual existence!

Thus, by the application of the four conditions of human consciousness—namely, distinction, relation, succession and personality—the metaphysical theology of former ages demolished. And while theologians arrive to the admission of their inability to prove anything effecting the real existence of God, they insist that this proves nothing beyond the fact the imbecility of the human mind. God may or may not exist. Man cannot know it in the true sense of knowing, by the aid of reason alone. Local formulas will not aid us in the leap the search for this higher knowledge.

Nor will the objective aid, on what we call "nature," help us of the difficulty. Nature revealing nothing but eternal transformations of itself. True, we see in nature trace of order and unity of design, and we infer that there must be a lawgiver designer. But whence come our conceptions of "order" and "design"? Are they inherent in nature, or are they merely illustrated by nature? I know that certain general laws which science speaks, pervade all phenomena. But what scientist will dare assert that these laws are part of nature? Is manifest when we rigidly examine the origin of

our conceptions of "order," "law," and "design," that these terms merely represent ideas which we ourselves convey to nature. They originate within, and not from without us. It is with mind, not matter, that we begin. And it is in the presence of mind only that matter assumes meaning. Hence, the mode of reasoning from special phenomena or effects in nature up to a first cause or God is necessarily defective. It can never lead to definite conclusions.

What then? Are we not forced to reject the *a priori* method of proving the existence of God, since it is shown to be inconsistent with the now generally accepted doctrine of the reality of all knowledge? And are we not likewise forced to reject the *a posteriori* method by reason of its inconsistency with established psychological principles? Must we then, indeed, take refuge in a blank Agnosticism? Either this, or in what the "Orthodox" call the theosophy of the mystics. There seems no other alternative.

For my part, I greatly prefer the mystics. I prefer to believe that man has a dual nature; that he is, so to speak, a denizen of two worlds at one and the same time; that there is a spiritual side to his nature; that his spiritual faculties are as transcend his rational, as the rational transcends the mere animal or the brute creation; and that, after all, there is really nothing "unscientific" or "irrational" in their belief in the supernatural or spiritual. Even Herbert Spencer, the great leader of modern Agnostic thought, tacitly admits as much; for he admits, or rather contends, that there is in the human mind an "indefinite consciousness" of the infinite and absolute which is above and beyond all reason and logical formulas. And this indefinite consciousness, he tells us, "just as real, because just as persistent, as any other form of consciousness." In this, he is supported by Prof. Joseph Le Conte, who in his late admirable work, entitled "Evolution and its Relation to Religious Thought," contends that "there is no real or efficient force but spirit."

In view of such admissions as these, by two of the most eminent scientific writers of modern times, why should Spiritualism, so-called, be deemed a mere phantasm? Why should revelation, in some form or other, be deemed the refuge of the unscientific? In and what is Mr. Herbert Spencer's "indefinite consciousness of the infinite and absolute," if it be not a form of revelation? What is revelation? The direct operation of spirit upon spirit. Then if Mr. Spencer's "indefinite consciousness" is not a delusion altogether, it must be nothing less than the spiritual operation of the infinite upon the finite; for it cannot be intelligently accounted for upon any other hypothesis.

And this, after all, but accords with the consensus of the whole human family. The religious sentiment is universal. All men, savage and civilized, have some kind of religion. All worship. A belief in higher attributes than mere human reason, in a higher plane of existence than the tangible, is not exceptional. It is universal. A nation of Atheists, properly so called, never existed. And this religious sentiment must always have a place among men, because even the Agnostic philosopher admit that it must always be possible for the mind to dwell upon that which transcends positive knowledge, and the religion, in all its forms, is distinguished from everything else in this that "its subject matter is that which passes the sphere of experience."

Nor is it pertinent to inquire whether this sense or the spiritual, this religious sentiment, be an act of special creation or the result of evolution. If the first named, then it responds to the Creator, and hence proves his existence. If the last named, how shall we account for the circumstances which brought it about? To assert that the religious sentiment, like the other faculties, is the result of a long process of evolution, and then deny the existence of God on the ground that "he is unnecessary," would be about as logical as the assertion that because the cosmic bodies are governed by a universal law which we call gravitation, therefore "no God is necessary." This last named argument is precisely the one used by the Orthodox church against Newton's law of gravitation. The other is now formulated by the "Orthodox" church against the already generally accepted theory of evolution.

INQUIRER.

The Jews.

Mr. Editor:—Can you inform me whether the Jews believe in a future state of existence? My impression is that they do not, but I am not sure that this is the case. Perhaps you can tell me how it is. I am having a dispute on the question, and I wish to be set right.

If we are not mistaken, it is generally conceded that the Old Testament—the Jewish Bible—does not teach the doctrine of future existence. Nor does the Jewish Standard, the New York Jewish paper which comes to this office, and which is of course good authority. It says in its last number:

"The religion of Moses was a law for the government of society, for the regulation of conduct, for the cultivation of right and justice in this world. It took no notice of the hereafter, and tacitly pointed to the rule subsequently laid down that 'to be beloved by man is to be beloved by God.' In the subsequent progress and evolution of the Jewish religion, reason did not abdicate its throne, though it did not keep entirely free from the influence wrought by the religious systems with which it was surrounded.

"Christianity changed all that for its followers. It transferred the focus of religion from this world to the life hereafter, and made mundane life preparatory to a life in a purely imaginary world, which could be built out to suit the fancy, whims, or policy of the dominant church. Life was regulated to suit the fancied future existence, and a source was opened for all the extravagancies which ecclesiastical theology has blessed—or, as might be more justly said, cursed—with us."

Presuming that this statement is correct, coming from Jewish authority, we may conclude that the Jews do not believe in future existence.—Boston Investigator.



MIND AND MATTER.

A Spiritual Drama in Five Acts.

BY SUNNY SOUTH.

Dramatis Personae.

MORTALS:
 Frank Linden, a Philosopher.
 May, his devoted wife.
 Their two children, respectively seven and nine years old.
 Gustave Mills, a Theological student.
 Annie Hall, May's friend.
 Barky, a Sexton.
 Margaret, his wife.

SPIRITS:
 Uriel, Frank's guide.
 Sister Anna, May's guide.
 Spirits of Hope, Charity, Faith, etc.

UNDEVELOPED SPIRITS:
 1 Spirit—Avarice.
 2 Spirit—Conceit.
 3 Spirit—Vanity.
 4 Spirit—Selfishness.
 5 Spirit—Pride.
 6 Spirit—Self Love.
 7 Spirit—Haughtiness.
 8 Spirit—Doubt.
 9 Spirit—Sarcasm.
 10 Spirit—Sensuality.

ACT III.

Scene:—Clerical Court. Janitor at the door awaiting audience.

So they be going to try young Mr. Mills for heresy—poor master Gustave—I saw nothing wrong in his opening sermon—he did open on old fogies, to be sure, but his sermon was splendid for all that—it went clean to my heart. Never mind, he's got master Frank Linden to back him, and I'm sure if they excommunicate him, master Frank will build him a chapel at his own expense, and by the faith, if I don't be one of his congregation—I'll give up my sextonship in the old church if I starve—I'll take up my post near him—he told me more truth in one sermon than all the old orthodox parsons have done in the past forty years. If there is any truth in some men being inspired by the spirit-world, he's one, sure—I'll bet my old beaver on it! (Throws his hat on the floor with force.) Hark, here comes some already—well, let the farce go on; mouth shut and ears open, Barky—the old woman is with you.

(Returns to the door and takes a respectful attitude. Enter Frank and Gustave, also May and her female friend, who seat themselves.)

Yes, my dear Frank, your wonderful experience has given me evidence on my own reasonings, and brought conviction to my soul, that there is a wide gulf between religion and spirituality. I could not deny these thoughts from my lectures, and have therefore brought condemnation upon myself.

Don't worry—I will stand by you. Let the old fossils have their way; progress only wants a few good players to lead the way, and others will follow. Let them find you guilty; this will give you popularity; the newspapers delight in such scandals, and the outcome will be free advertising for yourself.

Gustave (smiling.) You certainly take a practical view of this matter, but don't you allow for a man's reputation?

Frank. But the masses of the people are with you, and think as you do. Did all reformers meet with the same fate? The so-called Christians of to-day are but the Pharisees of the days of Christ—the time will come when they will be classed as a disband people, like the Jews; adhering strictly to their old dogmas, while the rising generations will become more and more liberalized, and give religion the cold shoulder. Free thought and science will develop them into thinkers, and when satiated with this, the soul naturally seeks philosophy which is the stepping-stone to spirituality. And when the soul craves for spiritual food, it must conform with reason, intuition and progress; otherwise it is rejected and atheism is the outcome.

Gustave. True, I can gossipy nothing of what you say; it all comports with my own feelings, and therefore I shall trust to a higher power for a solution.

(Seat themselves. Enter the clergy and vestrymen. The former take the judge's bench.)

Senior Clergymen, (striking with the gavel.)

The court of investigation will come to order! Mr. Secretary, you will please read the minutes of the last convocation.

Secretary, (rising.)

Meeting of the Diocese, January 4th. Present: Revs. Brown, White, Greene and Black, and Vestry chairmen Jones, Smith, Clark, Love, Hood, Cook and thirty vestrymen.

The chairman announced that a special meeting had been called for the purpose of investigating the conduct of Mr. Gustave Mills, an applicant for the ministry; who had been preaching free thought and disseminated teachings contrary to the dogmas of the church.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed, with Mr. Cook as chairman, to gather testimony to this effect, and be empowered on sufficient evidence, to prefer charges against said Mills.

After the selection of a worthy committee the meeting adjourned, subject to call of Rev. Mr. Brown, elected senior of the court of investigation.

AMINADAB B. SLIM, Secretary.

Janitor, (soliloquy.)

They have, no doubt, "cooked" up a nice charge against him, and they'll do him up "brown," too, with a "slim" chance of escape. Never you mind, me and the old woman are on his side.

Senior, (reads.) (Pompously.) Is Mr. Mills present?

Gustave, (rising.) I am at your service, gentlemen!

Senior. Will you please take a stand on that pedestal, sir? (pointing to a temporary prisoner's bench.)

Certainly, sir!

Janitor, (sol.) Ah, with what manly dignity he faces his accusers, and yet so humble. God bless him!

Senior. Mr. Mills, you have no doubt been notified of the purpose of this meeting, I presume?

Gustave. Yes, sir; to be tried for heresy?

Janitor, (sol.) And by a reverential Judge and jury.

Senior. We trust your defense will find sufficient grounds for a withdrawal of the charges.

Gustave. I place my trust in the Most High.

Janitor, (sol.) The best lawyer he could have got for his defense.

Senior, (bowing.) We respect your faith, but here are facts involved which are not to be trifled with.

Gustave, (with much animation and power.) God is a fact; and no man trifles with his faith in him!

Janitor, (sol.) That scared 'em—see how astonished they all look! Ah, my good Mr. Mills—you'll fix 'em. It's a funny world, this—is—first they accuse him of departing from the faith, and I would like to know who has the most—he or they?

Senior. The charges against you, my young friend, are of a grave character. First, in your trial sermon, which you delivered before a large audience, you are reported to have departed from the faith, instead of teaching according to the dogmas of our creed, that man must and can only be saved through atonement and by the blood of the Savior, have taught that this was an error, and that man should instead follow him practically. So much for the first charge. I will not make any long comment on this, but, my young friend, reason ought to tell you that this cannot be done—we are but weak mortals.

Janitor, (sol.) They are too weak to follow him because they don't get exercise enough. Besides that, if they did, they would have to practice abnegation, which don't suit those who look more to their material than their spiritual welfare.

Senior. The second charge is that in a sermon also delivered before a large congregation, you shall have said that the church needs liberalization, and that the people were cramped under its present doctrines. This, sir, is sedition, and not in consistency with our rules.

Janitor. Sedition—what does that mean—I suppose that means for the preachers not to get so fat.

Senior. The third charge is that you have lowered the dignity of the clergy by giving lectures to the people in public halls, and endeavoring to harmonize religion with science, and thus make a philosophy of it. This, sir, is revolution!

Janitor, (sol.) I suppose that means war!

Senior. Now, sir, you have heard the charges and have the right of defending yourself.

Janitor, (sol.) Any common court will permit that, too.

Gustave. I have no defense to make—it is all true!

Senior. Then you are guilty?

Gustave. Guilty guilty! That is a term which is applied to a culprit; not me!

Senior. Are you guilty or not guilty?

Gustave, (stamping.) Not guilty! And woe unto him who dares to set it!

Senior, (to the court.) What's the pleasure of the court in regard to this case?

Chairman. I make a motion that we give the gentleman another trial to bring in his defense if he considers himself not guilty, and also motion that we adjourn until to-day week.

Senior. All in favor of this motion will say aye!

(Many voices aye.)

Senior. To the contrary, nay! (raises the gavel.)

Nay! leyour gavel rest! I will speak!

Senior. The ays have it! (raises his gavel again.)

Gustave, (with authority.) Let not our gavel fall—I am inspired to speak! (To the audience.) My heads with God! To him I trust for this his destination—'tis not within the realm of mortal man to judge or arrogate high is the truth; each soul receives intuition light which leads, which gives him to the goal! Conscience, and to my heart's decree I've uttered which have evolved within a soul, and more! I was inspired bend my faculties to speak to man, not authority, but love! And here I stand accused of heresy, sedition—by mankind. How dare he know which is false or true? Truths, which arthurs for man to-day, may not be true to-morrow—all is relative. Press demands that we hold with themes, and not become like barren rock mere fossils. Man is eternal; thus progress must be infinite, and here or we follow in its wake! God be judge! To him I raise my voice! Giv or not—my case ascend to Him, noan; for he knows not of things spual; he delves in darkness on this adane sphere. Intuition be

our guide—not reason; this is man himself—intuition is the God in man. And through this gift divine light comes by inspiration from the higher spheres; and those who place their trust in this are strengthened by His love! Reason guides us in this world's affairs; conscience leads us, as instinct the animal; but intuition is the spirit's guide—our better self, the soul divine!

Who has the truth but He who ruleth all; who has the light but He who trusts to Him? Where is pure truth but in the universe—the book of nature e'er teeming with new life? The books of men are filled with arrogance! Theology is but a plant decayed, fed on by men whose minds are narrow-gauged; philosophy, a flower in everlasting bloom, giving life anew from age to age! This life is not that of the animal, e'er seeking food; nor to appease the appetites; nor one of self-buiness and avarice to nurse that mortal coil we drag about!

Nay; higher is man's destiny—a preparation for eternal progress is his aim! Development of soul leads to real life. Not through dogmas, creeds or priestly rule, but by pure thoughts that pierce unto the soul shall man be led unto the light! Not by rhetoric or gilded phrases, but heartfelt words of sacred love! Not by hypocritical so-called faith, but true and pure spirituality! Not by fear of punishment eternal, but by God's love, his higher principle; not by you, whose souls are cramped, but from the mouths of babes truth shall be given to the world and lead to eternal light!

Guilty or not—that is for him to say! Try those who will submit to mental slavery! Try yourselves, and let that bath no evil, the first stone let him cast. Let me be free; our paths do vary—you lead the blind, those of your ilk! I hereby cast the fetters of creedism to the east of bigotry and darkness! Let me walk the path of light and seek the truth through nature's laws! Now let us part, to meet at that tribunal where all is light! And let your gavel fall—I now say aye!

(Gavel falls—crowd leaves the court. As they pass out, dark spirits issue forth from all corners of the room and pass out with them. Gustave, Frank, Janitor and ladies remain.)

Frank. Give me your hand, friend Gustave—that was brave—fear nothing—you shall have an independent congregation and I'll warrant an attendance.

Janitor. Put me and the old woman down as one.

Frank, (laughing.) Two, you mean, Barky.

Janitor. No, sir, she and I, count us one whole one and a solid one, too.

Gustave. But, my good man, do not give up a certainty for an uncertainty.

Janitor, (taking his two hands.) I am with you, sir! I follow the truth, sir! Just put us down as a member and Janitor at the same time—the old woman is the member and I am the Janitor!

Gustave. God bless you, my good man; this is too much—I will take the will for the deed.

Janitor. No sirree—you take us both!

Frank. Never mind, Gustave, let Barky have his way. Now, Barky, you are a brave fellow, and I want just such a man about my house. If you are determined to throw up your sextonship of the old church, I will give you and your wife the position as porter and cook in my family. Board and lodging of course free; and about the salary—how much?

Janitor. Don't mention it, sir, don't mention it—I won't have any, but take the position to-morrow.

Frank. Well, you ought to know what your services are worth.

Janitor. Well, I'll leave that to you, after you see what I'm worth.

Frank. All right, Barky—move in to-morrow if you like!

Janitor. Thanks, Mr. Linden. You see, Mr. Mills, I knew God would help me.

Gustave. Yes, he provides for all!

(Invisible chorus sings.)

Frank. What is that?

Gustave. I hear!

Janitor, (trembling.) Them's spirits!

(Three guardian angels appear.)

May. Oh, sister Anna! As I've seen her in my dreams. That one is your guide, Frank—I've named him Uriel, so familiar have I become with him.

Gustave. And who is the other?

Spirit. I am your guardian angel!

Gustave. What a revelation!

(Kneels.) God be thanked for this light!

(All kneel and bury their faces in their hands.)

(Chorus behind the scenes.) CURTAIN FALLS.

End Act III.

To Be Continued.

our guide—not reason; this is man himself—intuition is the God in man. And through this gift divine light comes by inspiration from the higher spheres; and those who place their trust in this are strengthened by His love! Reason guides us in this world's affairs; conscience leads us, as instinct the animal; but intuition is the spirit's guide—our better self, the soul divine!

Who has the truth but He who ruleth all; who has the light but He who trusts to Him? Where is pure truth but in the universe—the book of nature e'er teeming with new life? The books of men are filled with arrogance! Theology is but a plant decayed, fed on by men whose minds are narrow-gauged; philosophy, a flower in everlasting bloom, giving life anew from age to age! This life is not that of the animal, e'er seeking food; nor to appease the appetites; nor one of self-buiness and avarice to nurse that mortal coil we drag about!

Nay; higher is man's destiny—a preparation for eternal progress is his aim! Development of soul leads to real life. Not through dogmas, creeds or priestly rule, but by pure thoughts that pierce unto the soul shall man be led unto the light! Not by rhetoric or gilded phrases, but heartfelt words of sacred love! Not by hypocritical so-called faith, but true and pure spirituality! Not by fear of punishment eternal, but by God's love, his higher principle; not by you, whose souls are cramped, but from the mouths of babes truth shall be given to the world and lead to eternal light!

Guilty or not—that is for him to say! Try those who will submit to mental slavery! Try yourselves, and let that bath no evil, the first stone let him cast. Let me be free; our paths do vary—you lead the blind, those of your ilk! I hereby cast the fetters of creedism to the east of bigotry and darkness! Let me walk the path of light and seek the truth through nature's laws! Now let us part, to meet at that tribunal where all is light! And let your gavel fall—I now say aye!

(Gavel falls—crowd leaves the court. As they pass out, dark spirits issue forth from all corners of the room and pass out with them. Gustave, Frank, Janitor and ladies remain.)

Frank. Give me your hand, friend Gustave—that was brave—fear nothing—you shall have an independent congregation and I'll warrant an attendance.

Janitor. Put me and the old woman down as one.

Frank, (laughing.) Two, you mean, Barky.

Janitor. No, sir, she and I, count us one whole one and a solid one, too.

Gustave. But, my good man, do not give up a certainty for an uncertainty.

Janitor, (taking his two hands.) I am with you, sir! I follow the truth, sir! Just put us down as a member and Janitor at the same time—the old woman is the member and I am the Janitor!

Gustave. God bless you, my good man; this is too much—I will take the will for the deed.

Janitor. No sirree—you take us both!

Frank. Never mind, Gustave, let Barky have his way. Now, Barky, you are a brave fellow, and I want just such a man about my house. If you are determined to throw up your sextonship of the old church, I will give you and your wife the position as porter and cook in my family. Board and lodging of course free; and about the salary—how much?

Janitor. Don't mention it, sir, don't mention it—I won't have any, but take the position to-morrow.

Frank. Well, you ought to know what your services are worth.

Janitor. Well, I'll leave that to you, after you see what I'm worth.

Frank. All right, Barky—move in to-morrow if you like!

Janitor. Thanks, Mr. Linden. You see, Mr. Mills, I knew God would help me.

Gustave. Yes, he provides for all!

(Invisible chorus sings.)

Frank. What is that?

Gustave. I hear!

Janitor, (trembling.) Them's spirits!

(Three guardian angels appear.)

May. Oh, sister Anna! As I've seen her in my dreams. That one is your guide, Frank—I've named him Uriel, so familiar have I become with him.

Gustave. And who is the other?

Spirit. I am your guardian angel!

Gustave. What a revelation!

(Kneels.) God be thanked for this light!

(All kneel and bury their faces in their hands.)

(Chorus behind the scenes.) CURTAIN FALLS.

End Act III.

To Be Continued.

Purity embelishes intellectuality and the latter grades character. Love adds a golden hue to the whole.

Man being an epitome of the universe, he can best learn the nature of the same by self study.

Without self-knowledge, judgment cannot be passed upon others; for we cannot understand the short-comings of another, except we know self.

An overbearing sense of forgiveness is not charity. True charity is always accompanied by more or less sympathy or sorrow for the one in fault.

English papers say that swallows are getting scarce in England, but they do not explain whether or not the decrease in their numbers is to be attributed to the operation of the new license law.—Somerville Journal.

MEETINGS.

(Secretaries of Societies are Respectfully Requested to Send us Brief Reports of their Meetings.—Ed. B. W.)

Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Society of Union Spiritualists, of Cincinnati, hold meetings at G. A. B. Hall, 115 W. Sixth street, every Sunday morning at 10:45, and Sunday evening at 7:45; also Wednesday evening of each week, to which all are made welcome.

The League for children and adults meets at G. A. B. Hall, 115 W. Sixth street, Cincinnati, every Sunday at 10 A. M. All are cordially invited.

Spiritual Healing and Developing Meetings, with speaking and music every Sunday at half-past 2 P. M. at American Health College, Fairmount. Free to all.

Boston, Mass.

1031 WASHINGTON STREET.—The First Spiritualist Aid Society meets every Friday. Private seance, for members only, first Friday in each month. Public meetings every Friday evening at 7:30. Mrs. H. D. Torrey, Secretary.

BANNER OF LIGHT CIRCLE-ROOM, No. 9 Beulah street.—Seances are held every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at 3 o'clock promptly. Admission free. For further particulars see notice on sixth page. L. B. Wilson, Chairman.

BOSTON SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, Berkeley Hall.—Lectures by able speakers Sundays at 10:45 A. M. and 7:45 P. M. Richard Holmes, President; Albert F. Ring, Secretary; O. L. Rockwood, Corresponding and Recording Secretary.

FIRST SPIRITUAL TEMPLE, corner Newbury and Reister streets.—Spiritual Fraternity Society will commence its public meeting Sunday, Oct. 7. The Temple Fraternity School for children meets at 10:45 A. M.; afternoon services at 7:45, and Wednesday evening social at 7:30.

SPIRITUALISTIC PHENOMENA ASSOCIATION, LADIES' AID PARLORS, 1031 Washington street.—Sunday meetings at 2:30 and 7:45 P. M. Solicits correspondence from mediums everywhere, through which interesting phenomena may occur, suitable for a public platform. J. H. Lewis, President.

COLLEGE HALL, 34 Essex street.—Sunday at 10:45 A. M. 2:30 and 7:45 P. M. Eben Cobb, Conductor.

EAGLE HALL, 616 Washington street, corner of Essex.—Sundays at 2:30 and 7:45 P. M.; also Wednesdays at 8 P. M. Able speakers and test mediums. Excellent music. Dr. E. H. Matthews, Chairman.

Berkeley Hall, Berkeley street.—The First Independent Club holds lectures every Sunday at 3 P. M. F. V. Fuller, Secretary.

Wells Memorial Hall, 987 Washington street.—The Independent Club meets every Wednesday at 2 P. M. Seances, followed by singing-circle. Supper served at 6 P. M., followed by entertainment. F. V. Fuller, Grand Master; Mrs. Ada Simmons, Treasurer; F. V. Fuller, Secretary.

Ladies' Aid Parlors, 1031 Washington street.—Sundays at 2:30 and 7:45 P. M. F. W. Matthews, Conductor.

America Hall, 724 Washington street.—Services each Sunday. Dr. W. A. Hale, Chairman.

Chelsea.—Spiritualist meetings are held in Pilgrim Hall, Old Fells Building, each Sunday evening, at 7:30 o'clock.

Cambridgeport.—Meetings are held every Sunday evening at Odd Fellows' Hall, 548 Main street. H. D. Simons, Secretary.

New York, N. Y.

The American Spiritualist Alliance meets at 219 West 42d street, New York City, on each alternate Wednesday at 8 P. M.

All spiritualists are cordially invited to become connected with THE ALLIANCE—either as resident or non-resident members—and to take an active part in its work.

THE ALLIANCE defines a Spiritualist to be: "One who knows that intelligent communication can be had between the living and the so-called dead," and all such are invited to become members.

NELSON CROSS, Pres. dent. J. F. JEANREY, Secretary, 44 Maiden Lane, N. Y.

Columbia Hall, 878 6th Avenue, between 49th and 50th streets.—People's Spiritualist meeting. Services every Sunday at 2:30 and 7:45 P. M. Mediums and speakers always present. F. W. Jones, Conductor.

ARCADE HALL, 57 West 25th street, N. E. corner, 6th Avenue.—Meetings of the Progressive Spiritualists are held every Sunday at 3 and 8 P. M. Reliable speakers and test mediums always present in spirit phenomena gifts. Prof. G. G. Van Horn, Con.

Adelphi Hall, corner 32d street and 7th Avenue.—First Society of Spiritualists holds meetings every Sunday at 11 A. M. and 7:45 P. M. Admission free.

A General Conference will be held every Monday evening at 230 West 36th street, at the residence of Mrs. M. O. Morrell.

Newark, N. J.

The People's Spiritual Fraternity holds meetings every Sunday evening at 7 o'clock at 139 Congress street. Mrs. G. Dorr, Secretary.

Philadelphia, Pa.

The Second Association of Spiritualists, of Philadelphia meet every Sunday at 3 P. M. at their church, Thompson Street. Seats free. Public invited.

Cleveland.

CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM, No. 1.—Meets every Sunday at 10:45 A. M., in G. A. B. Hall, 170 Superior St. Spiritualists and liberalists earnestly invited to send their children and the public cordially invited to attend.

FREE. Spiritualist Meetings, Memorial Hall, 170 Superior street. Every Sunday at 7:30 P. M.

Speakers: January, Walter Howell; February, J. Frank Baxter; March, J. J. Morse. Children's Lyceum every Sunday at 10:45 A. M. E. W. Gaylord, Conductor. Friends and public cordially invited.

The Spiritualists' Progressive Thought Society meets every Sunday at 2:30 P. M. in Probeck's Hall Franklin Avenue. Admission free.

First Alliance of Progressive Thought meet every Sunday in Clark's Hall, Cherry street, between J. B. J. son, 2018 Locust street; Secretary, W. M. Smith, 949 Dorset street.

The Chicago Spiritual Fraternity hold public meetings every Sunday at 3 and 7:45 P. M., at Kimball Hall 247 State street, corner of Jackson. Rev. Moses Hull, formerly a noted Advent minister, and one of the best biblical

THE BETTER WAY.

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At Two Dollars per Year to Subscribers in the United States; 2.00 Dollars and a half to any Foreign Country. No subscription entered till paid for, but sample copies will be sent to any address on application.

THE BETTER WAY cannot well undertake to touch for the honesty of its many advertisers. Advertisements which appear fair and honorable upon their face are accepted, and whenever it is made known that dishonest or improper persons are using our advertising columns, they are at once interdicted. We request patrons to notify us promptly in case they discover in our columns advertisements of parties whom they have proved to be dishonest or unworthy of action.

When the post office address of THE BETTER WAY is to be changed, our patrons should give us two weeks' previous notice, and not omit to state their present as well as future address.

Notice of Spiritualist Meetings, in order to insure prompt insertion, must reach this office on Tuesday of each week, as THE BETTER WAY goes to press every Wednesday.

NOTICE!
All communications pertaining to either the editorial or business department of this paper, or letters containing money, to reach us, and under which condition only we can assume responsibility for the same, must be addressed and money orders made payable to THE WAY PUBLISHING CO., 222 West Pearl Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The spirit world is in our aura.
It is better to B natural than to B flat.

Eloquence is inspiration expressed through the power of speech.
Something good can be said of everybody if we only penetrate deep enough. Sympathy will find it.

Inspiration is to the spirit what intuition is to the soul. One comes from spirits, the other from spirit.

Fraud hunters and medium testers will be regarded with the same ill-will in future ages that torturers of the past are regarded to-day.

Psychometry is the science of delineating character by the spiritual sense of feeling—either exercised independently or through spirit aid.

Gentle reproof or a kind way of telling a man he has made a mistake is better than fault-finding without remedy, or contempt without explanation. Neither enlightens him and he goes on sinning as it were.

The difference between a medium and a non-medium is that one is a spirit with a body, and the other is a body with a spirit. One lives in the spirit world and has a body to drag around while the other lives in the material world entirely.

Many could be spiritually guided for better results if they were not hampered by the opinions of others. The psychological effect of a stronger over a weaker mortal prevents the cognition of intuition in the latter.

We cannot fill our editorial columns with articles on the worldly questions of the day to the exclusion of the spiritual, nor let contributions of that order precede those on Spiritualism proper. Our philosophy offers topics enough to be discussed without going outside for additional ones.

It is not the medium but the spirit fraud we have to guard against. A medium cannot commit a fraud, in an unconscious state, and those who cannot tell the difference between a transfiguration and a spirit are not spiritually enough enlightened to attend a seance for materialization, and should first learn something of the spiritual science.

Among the greatest opposers of Christianity we find many old church members, while those who never belonged to a church are the most liberally disposed towards Christianity. Is this because the former know its errors best, or because they need to combat their own spirit to prevent a relapse? If such be the case, it is quite natural that the latter should be more liberal; for innocence is bliss in one instance, and need having no fear of a relapse they can afford to be liberal in the other.

THE BETTER WAY office came very near being consumed by fire last week. During the night fire broke out in a cigar factory occupying the third floor of the same building, but through the mediumship of the fire department the flames were confined to the factory and we escaped with a wetting, including some little damage to paper, files, cases, etc., which were in the floor above, the force of the water from the engines knocking out the window sashes and gutting that department. The B. W. continues to exist, and invites all lovers of the truth to subscribe.

To the intuitive minded thoughts are like flowers gathered by the wayside. The greater the variety, the prettier the bouquet. Those who perceive them as they course through the spiritual atmosphere are never at loss to while away the time. It is the true life, the real existence, the absolute of being, that is so frequently promised by inspired speakers and writers, and is akin to that condition in which a constant flow of love is felt from the supernal realms—the positive or spiritual side of life. Who would gainsay that life is not worth living under these circumstances? What else is this but a rapport with the origin of existence? What better definition can we give of God than that he is truth and love? And who need fear the opinions, the threats or doings of man amidst such influences.

OUR HAPPY DAY.

The anniversary of Modern Spiritualism is drawing nigh, and with the return of each event we too are drawing nigh to a higher center, where a universal brotherhood of spirits await our coming. But until that time, let us here feel that we are worthy of being admitted into that divine circle by endeavoring to mark the way with beautiful memories that will never fade and that will ever be pleasing to recall as something we can be thankful for; thankful because we left a connecting link between us and the material world and through which we will be empowered to continue our work in behalf of those we left behind. To accomplish such objects though we must co-operate with our fellow men while it is in our power—not defer it for an indefinite time. The eternal present is the only time we ought to know of; in fact is the only time we can know of, and all that can be done, should be done in the present; should be done while we are enabled to think, act or exist here.

Cincinnati is a beautiful spiritual center. Not only as a material resort, where man can spend a few days in varied pastime at a very limited expense, but as a concentration of mediumistic power, not excelled anywhere, comparatively speaking, and offers therefore a positive-negative condition in which all classes of people can feel congenial and brotherly, even though strangers to one another. Now, Spiritualists, who can enjoy such an atmosphere beyond any other class of people, should avail themselves of an opportunity when such is offered. The forty first anniversary of our cause will be celebrated on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, March 31st, April 1st and 2d, and which event induces an unusual spiritual activity in this locality and adds to the general influence of health instilling to those who are physically ailing, and hope inspiring to those who are sad, gloomy or depressed. Furthermore, it is specially desired that every member of the Ch. Valley Missionary Association be present on this occasion. The last anniversary was made eventful by its formation; this one shall be made more so by the celebration of its first birthday, which is to take place on the third of our happy days, April 2d. The first day, Sunday, will be celebrated by two regular services at the Spiritualists' hall, 115 West Sixth street. On Monday two services with music, lectures and tests, and a general conference meeting where everyone will be permitted to speak or sacrifice himself in some other way for the benefit of those present. The third day meeting of the O. V. M. A. Come one, come all, and enjoy "Our Happy Day!"

"CAN SPIRITS DIE?"

This question involves, first: What is life? Does a spirit depend on the same functions for existence that a mortal does? If so, how are they exercised? Or, are spirits entirely differently constructed, and how are they shaped? Clairvoyantly they have the exact appearance of mortals, although in many instances they seem translucent and even transparent. But in the latter instance nothing has been seen to indicate a human construction anatomically, except the figure, the whole appearing like a luminous cloud, some snow white and ethereal and others of a watery hue resembling the magnetic light that issues from an electro-magnetic battery at the two points where the conductors are placed in contact with each other.

Now, if such constitutes the substance of a spirit, or of the spirit body, it may be inferred that magnetism (or refined electricity) is an essence, or constitutes the spirit essence of matter as alcohol is the spirit essence of grain. But it is not necessarily said that spirit is the evolution of matter, or that this visible substance constitutes the soul, the life principle of the spirit. We know force or motion is visible, even to clairvoyant sight, and that force or motion is the soul or life substance of matter. In like manner the soul of man may be this force or soul principle individualized, and no more visible than the original from which it emanated. And as we know that our higher consciousness—our intelligence—issues from this unseen principle, we may infer that the original must be intelligent also. Thus intelligence or life *per se* is not considered as being a portion of the spirit body in question—except as the animating principle which gives it continued existence. Intelligence, therefore, is not involved in this question, as it cannot be analyzed by any of the physical or spiritual functions—whatever those of the latter may be. It is said that clairvoyance is spiritual sight. Well, this gives us reasons to believe that the spirit body is gifted with sight as the physical body is. We also have similar reasons to believe that the other four senses are likewise represented. But as the transparent spirit seen betrays no interior organs like those possessed by mortals, we have reason to believe that they are not dependent on such for existence.

To begin then, a spirit cannot be strangled or suffocated for want of air, as it is absolutely needed by a mortal to keep the body alive. Having no visible nervous system, it cannot suffer pain as we do, nor be prostrated to inanimation through suffering. Having no visible brain substance, it cannot be maimed so as to produce unconsciousness or insensibility.

Thus spirits cannot die as mortals die. But what sustains them? We leave this to our readers to answer—each one according to his or her own intuition.

LET US HAVE PEACE.

For the past two months we have been constantly on the defensive against criticisms and personal attacks from all quarters—one against many; and although we have no intention of giving up the fight, we are willing to make peace, provided our friends accept the situation and take us as we are. We cannot sacrifice principle for policy's sake or to oblige the few. We know the majority are with us; for silence speaks consent, and our principles have been pretty thoroughly ventilated to be understood by all readers. We mean no harm to any one in particular; at least not to individuals as such. We have the greatest sympathy for all who still have a mortal body to carry around with them; for we know by experience what it is to be a flesh-bound spirit. Many of us would and could do better if we were not constricted by matter or material surroundings, and knowing how we have been obstructed in our aims, our desires, our attempts to harmonize with all human characteristics, we can readily forgive those, comparatively few, who find it difficult to understand us. Like attracts like generally as far as our feelings towards others are concerned; but by combatting these involuntary upheavals and redundant unspiritual emotions, we finally attain a passive interior state which permits us, not only to become positive to the ebullitions of others when directed at us, but to calmly overlook the situation and note where poor humanity is mostly lacking in that which it needs and which it is striving for. The most common error of mankind in life's battle is to strike at the individual instead at the motive which governs him, when going on the war path. Failure is the inevitable result, because the individual is as much mortal as the offender is, and in the great majority will reply in the same strain or key-note as an individual simply, often forgetting principle in the heat of battle and thereby forfeits it. But, strike at the root, the cause, and you cripple him. Not only as an individual, but as a cause too—if yours be the superior. If not, the field belongs to him, and you should gracefully surrender or be exceedingly quiet for awhile. Prove to us that we are wrong in principle and we shall practice what we preach. But so far we have felt nothing yielding within or crumbling from our foundation as it were, which satisfies us that either the principle has not yet been aimed at, or none superior to it has been offered.

We repeat that we are not battling with personalities but with principles; nor have we the least desire to enter a campaign in which individuals might possibly be made to suffer or their usefulness destroyed as fellow mortals. We need all active workers to lend their aid in the promulgation of Spiritualism, and we, as one of them, have no other motive in view than to bring our cause up to a standard of respectability and practicability before the world. To accomplish this we cannot afford to lose one link of our chain—not one brother, member or medium by dissent. As individuals we must be brotherly; for without that we shall never reach organization. Opinions may be discussed pro and con; principles may be fought until the air becomes pregnant with mental dust or thought fragments; but let love govern the souls that engage in this warfare, and the very combat will be the means of uniting them all the closer together.

Thus we say to all who have opposed us: let us be friendly in spirit, and aim for one common good, whatever it may be. We have not been hurt so far, except some may feel yet inclined to continue the fight, since we have exposed the method to them, how to go about it. But as our motives are impersonal and our principles purely spiritual in nature, we have no fear to meet whatever comes. Thoughts being cheap and to be had by simply wishing for them, there is no danger of a drought. The spiritual atmosphere is impregnated with them, and the more we all draw from that fount the better for humanity. Let the battle of thoughts therefore continue if necessary, but as brethren in one common cause and as individuals, let us have peace!

We have before requested that the writing of proper names, whether of persons or places, be done legibly, as there is no rule by which such can even be guessed at; and must therefore repeat that contributors must hereafter take the responsibility of such errors on themselves and try to rectify them on an occasion when writing for the paper again—not by articles especially contributed for that purpose. As a rule newspapers do not make these corrections any more—except in paid matter—it being supposed that contributors nowadays are able to write legible enough for printers to read.

When we speak of angels we mean spirits who have attained a condition freed from the control of materiality, i. e. from selfishness or the continued love of physical enjoyments, as we all know earth-bound spirits still delight in. Purified spirits implies rather more than a mere freedom from earthiness, and as angel signifies messenger, we think the term a very appropriate one to use. Freed spirits may be employed to express the idea, but this might embarrass us when taking in consideration that all spirits out of the body are freed. So we shall use the term angel until a better one is substituted.

Mr. E. Jacobs in a note requests that the word Bahia be read for Baltic; Grant for Gremitt, and aneroïd for aneroïd, in his last contribution.

WHAT IS SPIRIT?

Spirit is thought, the life principle of all that exists. Man is an embodiment of it; thought individualized. By self-knowledge he gains a comprehension of it; for thought is intelligence evolved for a definite effect, and by noting the effect, may judge of its quality or qualification. A thought sent forth is a creation, taking shape in spirit or universal thought and there remains in tact to commingle with those of its own quality. Whether all evil thoughts center themselves in one particular locality on this earth's sphere, or in varied force-centers may be left to speculation. To judge from the variety of such thoughts it may be inferred that they form a variety of points around which to gravitate—each to its kind, and there constitute the variety of hells dreamed of by Dante, every such hell reflecting a panorama of thought creations, and to which, in all probability, those spirits are attracted who aided in making up these diabolical regions—except where said spirits have created a sufficient quantity of better thoughts to neutralize the effect of their bad ones, and are thus attracted to other and more congenial climes and scenes.

Man is as much a creator as Deity or universal thought—spirit. If not, he is neither immortal; for if the essence of which he is created does not take shape as an individualized creation, man cannot remain intact as a spirit. Consistency must be, otherwise it is useless to hope or speculate on a future individualized state. Without that there is no absolute existence and all life in the universe is relative—temporary.

Thus thought is self-existent, whether good or bad, and what man enacts, becomes a part of himself. A selfish thought takes its place among those of its ilk; a selfish action commingles with the aura or interior life-principle, and constitutes the heaven or hell which man carries around with him—the so-called "condition."

Condition is to the soul what a habitation is to the mortal being. To build a house the thought must be first created. When the thought is enacted or carried out it remains with the house—becomes a part of the same, the house taking shape according to the bent of the thought. So a selfish action takes shape around the being who creates it, and becomes an apartment or an ornament of his future dwelling place, and from which he peers forth into the spirit world when he throws off the mortal body. Thus he sees it subjectively, and be the surroundings ever so beautiful, they will appear distorted, angular, dreary, dark or hideous according to the mould of his spiritual aura or the color of his conditions. And if he has sent out more selfish, hateful, envious or malicious thoughts than kind, sympathetic, charitable or forgiving ones, he will probably be attracted to regions comporting with his conditions—if such conditions have existence, and which we may infer from the fact that beautiful conditions are said to exist. Consistency would hardly permit one to exist without the other—except there are no actual scenes in the spirit world, and man only sees that which he carries with him. But this would seem illogical, for if the beauties of material nature are but a reflection of spiritual nature, then all that we have an illustration of in matter, must exist in spirit also.

Thought is therefore spirit acting for a definite effect, and man is an epitome of universal spirit. Universal thought expresses itself as worlds and suns, and individualized thought as cities and towns, etc. Spirit is the cause so-to-say and material creations or expressions the effects—man being one of these effects. And if man is immortal or continues to live after decay of his material body, we may be sure that the effects of universal spirit will continue to exist as definite expressions or creations as well as man. We have positive proof of the latter, and if the spirits' vision and clairvoyant visions of mortals are to be relied on, we may regard them as proofs without further inference. But as clairvoyant descriptions of spirits have verified themselves in thousands and thousands of instances, why should not clairvoyant descriptions of towns, cities, worlds and even spiritual universes be sufficient evidence that they do exist. We have seen both and do not require the testimony of others to bring forward as proofs, and were present at a circle of three persons, where a lady clairvoyant suddenly began to describe a city which now has no existence, giving an accurate outline of ancient Rhodes. The third party present recognized the description, and we know positively that the clairvoyant did not, at that time, have or ever had the remotest idea of its historic record. Such incidents furnish conclusive proofs that even man's material creations are immortal as well as himself.

And if cities and towns, why not habitations, inventions, paintings, ornaments and other things that he would wish to preserve. If man wishes to destroy a creation of this sort again, why should it not be possible, thus withdrawing the spirit of it by absorbing it into his own spirit? If this is possible with one thought it may be with more, and by recalling all the evil thoughts he sent out in spirit, he may erase some ugly monuments that now stand awaiting his inspection in the future. Probably the remorse or regret that sometimes overcomes us, is the gathering-in of these unspiritual thoughts; and if so, how grateful ought we to be that such is possible. In like manner we may be enabled to undo many little selfish actions—either by remuneration or by displacing them for good ones. It is never too late to amend, and the sooner we dust out our spiritual mansion, the sooner it will admit more light on the subject: What is spirit?

ON EXPOSES.

Exposing the tricks of so-called mediums, or even those of mediums that practice fraud in connection with their spiritual gift, is not exposing Spiritualism proper. True Spiritualism can only be exposed by genuine manifestations through genuine and honest mediums, and the more of it the better for the cause. Every genuine expose brings in a flock of new converts, while every pretended expose advertises us and brings new investigators. But when Christian evangelical alliances stoop to indulge in the very uncharitable occupation of trying to damage true Spiritualism, or any other religion, by allying themselves with so-called expositors, or persons not recognized by the sect of which they claim to be members, we must believe that the dignity of the church is at a low ebb indeed—a veritable disgrace to the Christ whom they profess to follow in humility and love. What has become of that charity which the founder of Christianity implanted when he said, "Love ye one another?"—Suppose Spiritualists were to ally themselves with the outcasts or debased preachers of Christianity for the purpose of injuring it, what would respectable Christians think of us? Well, respectable Spiritualists have about the same opinion of these so-called Christians who indulge in such undignified and debasing occupations.

At the exhibition given at the Odeon on Tuesday evening, a Mr. J. W. Fletcher (not of Independent Club fame, but the gentleman who was exposed by the Spiritualist Society of Cincinnati last fall as one who was simulating Spiritual manifestations) proved himself a very successful trickster in imitating slate-writing, raps and other physical manifestations, to a large audience. Not, however, explaining how slate-writing was done while the slate remains in the hands of the owner, and often wrapped up in paper; nor how mental questions are answered on the same, giving names and dates correctly; nor how letters are answered when sewed up and sealed; nor how mediums and furniture are levitated; nor hundreds of other things which only can be produced through genuine mediums.

At one time this gentleman was thought to be a genuine medium, but by his own admission he was only deceiving the public, both Spiritualists and investigators, and now declares that Spiritualism is not what it claims to be, and that all manifestations are the result of tricks performed by mediums. He judges others by himself in this respect. There are no tricks in mediumship. Either a person is a medium or he is not. If not, he is not one of us, and we do not acknowledge him; and honest investigators therefore need not allow themselves to be intimidated by one who pretends to know what he does not know. Such an individual simply exposes himself—not Spiritualism.

Our second and seventh pages have some exceedingly interesting reading matter this week. Several new contributors grace their columns.

Reviews.

Part first of Dr. E. D. Babbitt's great work, "Human Culture and Cure," is on our table. It will appear in six volumes; the first is entitled "The Philosophy of Cure," and contains interesting studies on the philosophy of force, chemical affinity and repulsion, law of harmony and power, relation of psychological forces, the various causes of disease, magnetism, electricity, human temperament, healing by light and color, solar architecture, color as a measure of force, massage, mind cure and statismology, homeopathy and some miscellany.—We cannot do the book justice by praising it, as the more trashy a thing is now-a-days, the louder it is advertised in this manner. All we can say is, read it. The stock of information it contains is worth \$50, while the book retails for 50 cents. Address New York Therapeutic Co., 39 W. 27th st., New York.

"The Christ; who and what is it? Or, some of the Spiritualism and Mediumship of the Bible compared with that of today." By Moses Hull, and published by M. Hull & Co., 675 West Lake street Chicago. The title pretty well explains the nature of the book, and the author, in his preface, says that its purpose is to have Spiritualists look more favorably on the Bible. No price is given, but, being a fifty-page pamphlet, we suppose 25 cents can purchase one. We advise all who are unfavorably disposed towards the Bible to send for a copy.

"The Spiritual Philosophy condensed in a Nutshell." Two anniversary poems by Dr. Dean Clarke. A twelve-page pamphlet. Single copies, 10 cent; 11 for \$1; 25 for \$2. Address 25 West Tenth avenue, Denver, Col.

"Hydesville Chromoed;" a beautiful illustration in varied colors showing the descending spirits by the light of the moon. For particulars, see advertisement on fifth page.

Personal.

W. C.—Will see the light today.
F. L.—Thanks for New York papers.
H. N. B.—"Scraps of local interest relating to spiritual matters" are always acceptable for publication.
J. F. J.—We have said all that we would like to have said on the subject of exposes. The more such things are utilized, the worse for the cause. Simply and exposes as shown that do not concern us, and not as Spiritualists. Why not abate all the slight-of-hand fraternity as we have nothing to do with either. I don't know them. They do not exist for!
R. D. M.—So far organization only local, although Spiritualists are uncannily organized on the broad trinity of immortality, Self-culture and Brotherhood! The first is a fact proven by spirit returned the other two are effects of this intelligence—every cause having in effect a positive and negative condition, and those of knowledge of immortality are purely averse (temperance and humanity.)—Visit medium and familiarize your spirit friend with the art of controlling mediums, so that you give the tests you need.

Reported for The Better Way.

Cincinnati Society of Union Spiritualists.

Synopsis of Answers to Questions by Mrs. Helen Stuart Richings, Sunday Morning, March 17, 1889.

Mrs. Richings labored under the difficulty of having just arisen from a bed of sickness, and the services were, therefore, necessarily briefer than usual, but nevertheless, the lecture was as interesting and instructive as ever. Mrs. Richings is one of the best lecturers and mediums, and she should and does have the best wishes and kindest sympathy of her audience. Below we give a brief synopsis of the leading points of the discourse.

This being St. Patrick's Day, of what benefit was he to humanity? When you look at a man's life to determine its effects upon humanity you must judge to a great extent by external appearances, as the records show us what was the value given to his life by his neighbors; but this does not give us a full or satisfactory test of the real value of his work to humanity. In order to know this we should know the motives that inspired him to his work and the causes that have tended to endear him to the hearts of a nation. There are great men and women living in our midst, whom we do not recognize as being great, because we do not comprehend them and their motives.

To understand why men are called great, we must see what there was in their life that appealed to the people. When we look at the life of St. Patrick, as we have it in the records, we should say that he was a man of great sympathy and desirous of being a benefit to humanity as he found it! Even though his history has been idealized; even though he is only a representation of an idea, the ideal has been of benefit to the world, if it has only inspired one man to rise above the weaknesses of life and be of use in the world. St. Patrick stands as the type of goodness and love to a large number of people, who without him would probably not rise as far as they have with him. Were we able to go back to the time when he lived and see him as he actually was we would probably find him an enthusiastic reformer, a man with his faults and peculiarities, the same as other human beings. But he stands to-day as the type of a line of thought, of kindness, and a far-reaching human sympathy. The thought has lived through the ages, as all thought will, and what matter if it has become personified; the underlying truth in it is the same. Thought can never die; it lives on forever silently performing its mission of love or hate, as it emanated from our souls.

A kind thought may go out from us to travel through eternity; it may reach some poor, down-trodden soul and kindle anew within him, aspirations to rise above the low plane upon which he has been dwelling. How sweet it will be to meet that soul sometime in the years of eternity and hear the words: "Back in the ages of earth life you sent out to me a kindly thought that lifted me from the depths of darkness to the light, and what I am to-day has grown from that thought of yours." How dark and sad it will be to hear the reverse; to know that our unkind thought has crushed some soul and kept it in black despair. Let us then grasp the idea that to be of benefit to humanity we must send our kindest thoughts and wishes of human love and sympathy, and it is much in this way, we think, that St. Patrick has been a benefit to humanity.

How are we to banish fraudulent mediums from the ranks of Spiritualism and prevent the credulous from being imposed upon? Only we think by developing a spirit of honesty and truthfulness in ourselves and thus giving the best conditions for the production of the genuine phenomena. We say let the frauds go their own way and you go yours. We shall get rid of them sooner if we don't pay so much attention to them. Give a fraudulent spirit enough rope and he will hang himself; he cannot carry on a systematic scheme of deception, without sooner or later exposing himself. Fraudulent mediums need your sympathy and pity, rather than your condemnation. Let them remain in the ranks, for perhaps, by so doing you may bring them to a realization of the enormity of their crime, and thus to a true repentance, and in time be numbered among the true workers for cause. The fraud we meet with, sometimes serves as a spiritual whetstone upon which to sharpen the edge of our wits, which is apt to get dull from inactivity. How would it sound for a farmer to say he wouldn't raise wheat because of the chaff. Well it is just so in Spiritualism. We should not throw away the wheat because mixed with chaff. We must learn to distinguish between the false and the true. If we surround ourselves with an atmosphere of love, purity, harmony, and strict integrity, we destroy the conditions in which frauds thrive, by depriving them of their sustenance.

Can spirits predict disasters forty-eight hours previous to their occurrence and can the disaster be avoided? In some cases, yes, for we know of cases where disaster has been averted by the knowledge given in the prediction. As a rule we think that no prophecy can be made absolute, since effects can only be predicated from causes, and if causes cease to exist, the effects cannot follow.

HELEN

STUART-RICHINGS

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(TO BE CONTINUED.)